

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A steering column apparatus comprising:

a steering shaft to which a steering wheel is mounted at the rear end portion thereof;

a cylindrical steering column for rotatably supporting said steering column therein;

vehicle body-side bracket used to sandwich and fix said steering column;

a distance unit formed to be expanded from said steering column by plastic working and sandwiched by said body-side brackets; and

position adjusting means for making the position of said steering column with respect to said body-side brackets adjustable within a predetermined adjustment range,

wherein said position adjusting means comprises as its constituent element an adjusting bolt for passing through said body-side bracket and said distance unit so as to clamp said distance unit through said body-side bracket, and

said adjusting bolt is positioned above said steering shaft.

2. (Original) A steering column apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said steering column is adjustable in a tilting direction with respect to said body-side bracket, and the lower end of said body-side bracket is positioned higher than the lower surface of said steering column.

3. (Currently Amended) A steering column apparatus according to Claim 1-~~or~~-2, wherein an electric assist mechanism for assisting a steering power of said steering wheel is secured to the tip end of said steering column.

4. (Currently Amended) A steering column apparatus according to Claim 1-~~or~~-2, wherein said plastic working is performed by hydroforming.

5. (New) A steering column apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein an electric assist mechanism for assisting a steering power of said steering wheel is secured to the tip end of said steering column.

6. (New) A steering column apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein said plastic working is performed by hydroforming.